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## CORRESPONDENCE.

*To the Editor of the American Naturalist:*

SIR: — Apropos of Dr. Theodore Gill's letter in the March number relative to early collections of the vernacular names of animals, it is interesting to recall that Thomas Gray, "the English poet who has written less and pleased more than any other," was an accomplished naturalist for his time, and busied himself during the last ten years of his life in compiling, amongst other notes, a voluminous catalogue of the familiar names of plants and animals. Not only the common English synonyms are given of Linné's species, but also their equivalents in more than a score of languages, some of the citations being from remote and little-known tongues.

These lists were written down by Gray in his interleaved copy of the tenth edition of the *Systema Naturæ*, and portions of them, some 25 pages in all, were published in the second volume of Mr. T. J. Mathias's edition of Gray's *Works*, which appeared in 1814. Other selections from the same source, with facsimiles of some of his drawings, have recently been published by Mr. Charles Eliot Norton, who now possesses Gray's original copy. No one can take up this little booklet<sup>1</sup> without feeling grateful to Professor Norton for having placed this "monument of Gray's learning and industry" within general reach. It is stated by the editor that these annotations, if printed, would form a volume at least equal in size to one of Linné's, and that the light they throw on the poet's occupations and interests during his latter years helps us to a "more just appreciation of his character and his acquisitions."

Those interested in the derivation of the common names of animals may find it worth while to consult a paper by J. W. Gibbs on the "Origin of the Names of Beasts, Birds, and Insects," published in vol. xli, of the *American Journal of Science* (pp. 32-39, 1841).

C. R. EASTMAN.

<sup>1</sup> *The Poet Gray as a Naturalist with Selections from his Notes on the Systema Naturæ of Linnæus* etc. Boston, Charles E. Goodspeed. 1903. pp. 67.